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Gulf Coast Interfaith (GCI) continues its work in the key areas of democracy, disaster recovery, housing, healthcare, employment, education, and Latino Outreach in an effort to advance social, economic and health opportunities for the residents of the city of Galveston and Galveston County and the Gulf Coast area. Collaborating with local congregations and community advocacy groups, we are consistently reaching to fulfill our goal to produce tangible, sustainable solutions to the issues facing our neighbors.

GCI

Galveston County Collaborating Organizations

GCI made its small 2nd floor office at 2728 Ave Q available to the Collaborating Organizations¹ (aka CO) for meetings on October 10th, November 14th, and December 5th.

There were wide ranging discussions covering many issues including scattered sites for 388 Galveston public housing units, Galveston Northside redevelopment, Sandpiper Cove Apartments, immigrant children in Galveston County, affordable housing throughout Galveston County, Sec. 3 compliance by Galveston and Galveston Housing Authority and other Galveston county government entities, pay day lending ordinance in Galveston, living wages in Galveston, as well as social justice, and prioritizing the needs of the community and the availability of volunteer time.

EMPLOYMENT

Living Wage Study Group

The Living Wage Study Group held their monthly meetings on October 18th at St. Patrick Catholic Church, November 20th at Live Oak Baptist Church, and December 20th at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

A delegation from the Living Wage Study Group met with Kelly de Schaun, Executive Director, Galveston Park Board on October 8th; Mona Purgason, Executive Director, Galveston Housing Authority

¹ The membership of the coalition known as the Galveston County Collaborating Organizations a/k/a CO varies depending on the issue. Generally the CO is comprised of: NAACP Galveston Unit 6180, LULAC Galveston Council 151, Galveston Coalition for Justice, Galveston Northside Task Force, Gulf Coast Interfaith, Barbour's Chapel Community Development Corporation Inc, NAACP Mainland Branch Unit 6201, NAACP Dickinson/Bay Area Branch Unit 6280, LULAC Texas City Council 255, and Gulf Coast Homeless Coalition.

on October 10th; Mike Mierzwa, Executive Director, Galveston Port Authority on October 15th; and representatives of Sodexo and Azecta, contractors for UTMB, on October 16th to discuss low wage employees. Information was requested during the meetings that was subsequently forwarded by almost all of the participants and is now under review.

A house meeting led by members of the Living Wage Study Group will be scheduled in January or early February at the Galveston Islamic Center. At the meeting, members of the congregation will be encouraged to discuss their experience and knowledge of the conditions of low wage workers in Galveston and to complete a survey.



Living Wage Study Group held its monthly meeting at The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on December 20, 2014

Section 3

The CO sent a request to GLO, GHA and City of Galveston on December 8th for relevant documents reflecting the creation, enforcement and success of their respective Section 3 programs since Hurricane Ike made landfall. Replies were received before Christmas and will be reviewed.

Pay Day Lending Ordinance

On November 17th GCI leader Steve McIntyre met with former Galveston city councilmember Elizabeth Beeton and Ann Baddour, staff attorney for Texas Appleseed in the office of Galveston councilmember Terrilyn Tarleton to discuss the passage of a strong and effective pay day lending ordinance in Galveston. All agreed such an ordinance was needed and the adoption of the Texas Municipal League model ordinance was discussed and agreed upon by everyone. Baddour agreed to attend the city council work session to facilitate the discussion. The work session is scheduled for January 8, 2015.

HURRICANE IKE RECOVERY and AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The CO held a lengthy meeting with Texas Appleseed and Texas Low Income Housing and Information Services staff on October 16th to thoroughly discuss and consider many of the current housing and development issues in Galveston County and plan future activities. A bus tour of Galveston was also conducted for the CEO of Gulf Coast Housing Partnership and President of Barbours Chapel Community Development Corporation to better educate them of the possibility of doing progressive and constructive housing and community development work in Galveston.



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